PAN Card

1149. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the actual number of Permanent Account Number (PAN) cards issued during the current financial year;

(b) whether it is fact that there are a number of instances of duplicate PAN card issued and Demat account opened using them; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to prevent such duplication?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) The number of PAN cards issued by the PAN service providers M/s. UTITSL and M/s. NSDL during current financial year, till 03.03.2008, are 1,16,29,940.

(b) Yes Sir, Approximately 4% of the PAN holders were found to be in possession of duplicate PAN. However, no cases where demat accounts have been opened using duplicate PANs have been reported by the National Securities Depository Ltd. (NSDL) and Central Depository Services Ltd. (CSDL).

(c) Submission of proof of identity and address, along with PAN application form has been made mandatory. PAN service providers, i.e. UTITSL and NSDL are required to check and match details filled in the PAN application form with such supporting documents. Penal provisions have also been provided in the Income-tax Act as deterrance against obtaining more than one PAN cards. Further, an education drive has been launched to educate tax payers about the consequences of possessing more than one PAN.

Check on inflationary pressure

1150. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a divergence of opinion between him and the Governor of Reserve Bank of India relating to inflation in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and how Government is considering this matter to put a check on the increase of inflation in the country;

(c) how far the pensioners, agriculture sector and the prices of fertilizers, oil and food would be adversely affected as a result of hike in inflation; and

(d) how should matter be brought to an end for future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) The year-on-year inflation as on February 23, 2008 for food grains, edible oils and fertilizers was 3.00 per cent, 13.19 per cent and 1.80 per cent, respectively as compared to 9.66 per cent, 13.29 per cent and 1.83 per cent, respectively as on February 24, 2007. Impact of inflation on different sections of the society depends on the composition of their respective consumption basket. The Monetary policy of Reserve Bank of India, while being conducive to economic growth has attempted to contain inflationary expectations arising out of uncertainties in domestic and international environment. Containment of inflation also remains high on the agenda of the Government. Anti-inflationary policies of the

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government include strict fiscal discipline, rationalization of duties of essential items effective supply demand management of essential commodities through liberal tariff and trade policies, and strengthening the public distribution system. Policies of the Reserve Bank of India and the Government complement each other.

DR. Y.S.P. Thorat Committee

1151. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has approved the recommendation of Dr. Y.S.P. Thorat Committee on Human Resource Development in Rural Banks;

(b) whether Government shares, the views of the Chairman of all Regional Rural Banks in this regard as recorded in the proceedings of 2 June, 2007 at Lucknow; and

(c) whether Government is going to constitute a Committee on amendment of RRB staff service rules, as recommended by Dr. Thorat Committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (c) The Report of Dr. Y.S.P. Thorat Committee on Human Resource Development in Rural Banks is under consideration.

Interest subvention scheme

1152. SHRI KESHUBHAI S. PATEL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has announced an Interest Subvention Scheme for providing farm credit at the rate of 7 per cent;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the State Government of Gujarat has pointed out some difficulties for its implementation in their State; and

(d) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) The Government has decided to ensure that farmers receive Short Term Credit at 7% with an upper limit of Rs. 3 lakh on the principal amount since 2006-07. Public Sector Banks, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) and Cooperative Banks are being provided interest subvention on their own involvement of funds @ 2%. The Government is also providing interest subvention to NABARD and concessional refinance to RRBs and Cooperative Banks for the purpose. This scheme continues for the years 2007-08 and 2008-09.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Government of Gujarat had highlighted the following difficulties in implementation of above scheme in Gujarat:

* Government of India to consider provision of interest subvention to Cooperatives on their own involvement.
* NABARD's refinance to Cooperative Banks to be to the extent of 85% of their crop loans.

NABARD's refinance to be available to all Section 11(1) non-compliant banks.